

Vary your protein routine

Protein foods include both animal (meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs) and plant (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds) sources. We all need protein—but most Americans eat enough, and some eat more than they need. How much is enough? Most people, ages 9 and older, should eat 5 to 7 ounces* of protein foods each day depending on overall calorie needs.

1 Vary your protein food choices
Eat a variety of foods from the Protein Foods Group each week. Experiment with beans or peas, nuts, soy, and seafood as main dishes.

2 Choose seafood twice a week
Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Select a variety of seafood, including those that are higher in oils and low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.



3 Select lean meat and poultry
Choose lean cuts of meat like round or sirloin and ground beef that is at least 93% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove poultry skin.

4 Save with eggs
Eggs can be an inexpensive protein option and part of a healthy eating style. Make eggs part of your weekly choices.

5 Eat plant protein foods more often
Try beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), nuts, and seeds. They are lower in saturated fat and some are higher in fiber.



6 Consider nuts and seeds
Choose unsalted nuts or seeds as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes. Nuts and seeds are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.

7 Keep it tasty and healthy
Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking—they don't add extra fat. Some lean meats need slow, moist cooking to be tender—try a slow cooker for them. Avoid breading meat or poultry, which adds calories.

8 Make a healthy sandwich
Choose turkey, roast beef, canned tuna or salmon, or peanut butter for sandwiches. Many deli meats, such as regular bologna or salami, are high in fat and sodium—make them occasional treats only.



9 Think small when it comes to meat portions
Get the flavor you crave but in a smaller portion. Make or order a small turkey burger or a “petite” size steak.


10 Check the sodium
Check the Nutrition Facts label to limit sodium. Salt is added to many canned foods—including soups, vegetables, beans, and meats. Many processed meats—such as ham, sausage, and hot dogs—are high in sodium. Some fresh chicken, turkey, and pork are brined in a salt solution for flavor and tenderness.

* What counts as an ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood; 1 egg; ¼ cup cooked beans or peas; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; or 1 tablespoon peanut butter.

Reduce Your Sodium (Salt) Intake

- Read the Nutrition Facts labels to choose foods that are lower in sodium.
- When purchasing canned foods, select those labeled as “reduced sodium,” “low sodium,” or “no salt added.” Rinse regular canned foods to remove some sodium.
- Gradually reduce the amount of sodium in your foods. Your taste for salt will change over time.
- Consume more fresh food and few processed foods that are higher in sodium.
- Eat more home-prepared foods, where you have more control over sodium, and use little or no salt or salt-containing seasonings when cooking or eating foods.
- When eating at restaurants, ask that salt not be added to your food or order lower-sodium options, if available.

Tips for Using Herbs and Spices (Instead of Salt)



Basil	Use in pastas, soups, salads, vegetables, fish, and meats.
Chili Powder	Use in soups, stews, salads, vegetables, and fish.
Cinnamon	Use in salads, vegetables, breads, and snacks.
Cloves	Use in soups, salads, and vegetables.
Dill Weed and Dill Seed	Use in fish, soups, salads, and vegetables.
Garlic	Use in soups, vegetables, meats, chicken, and stir-fries.
Ginger	Use in soups, salads, vegetables, meats, and stir-fries.
Marjoram	Use in soups, salads, vegetables, beef, fish, and chicken.
Nutmeg	Use in vegetables, meats, and snacks and in breads in place of sugar.
Oregano	Use in pastas, soups, salads, vegetables, meats, and chicken.
Parsley	Use in pastas, salads, vegetables, fish, and meats.
Rosemary	Use in pastas, salads, vegetables, fish, and meats.
Sage	Use in soups, salads, vegetables, meats, and chicken.
Thyme	Use in salads, vegetables, fish, and chicken.

Note: To start, use small amounts of these herbs and spices to see whether you like them.

Resource: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-style>

Know Your Fats

Fats and oils are vital to our health — but not all fats are created equal.



What you need to know about the fats we eat:

	Unsaturated	Saturated	Trans
Are these fats good for you?	Yes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower “bad” cholesterol (LDL) • Lower your risk of heart disease and stroke • Provide fats your body needs, like omega-3 fatty acids 	No. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) • Raise your risk of heart disease and stroke 	No. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) • Lower your “good” cholesterol (HDL) • Raise your risk of heart disease and stroke
Which foods contain these fats?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable oils (like olive oil, canola oil, or sunflower oil) • Avocados • Peanut butter • Fatty fish • Many nuts and seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many animal foods (like fatty beef, poultry with skin, lard, cream, butter, cheese, and whole milk) • Baked goods • Fried foods • Coconut oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked goods such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastries • Pie crusts • Biscuits • Cookies • Crackers • Stick margarines • Shortenings
How much should you eat each day?	Most of the fat you eat should be unsaturated.	Limit the amount of saturated fats you eat each day.	Avoid <i>trans</i> fats.

Use these steps to limit unhealthy fats:

- For protein, choose lean cuts of meat or poultry. Or, choose non-meat proteins like fish, beans, lentils, nuts, and seeds.
- Cook meats by roasting, grilling, or stir-frying. Avoid deep-frying.
- Read labels. Choose foods with less saturated fat and no *trans* fats.
- Read the ingredients list. Avoid foods that list “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” oils.
- Watch out for baked goods, crackers, margarines, and shortenings. They often contain *trans* fat.